

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 07267 262004Z

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3472

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: APUB/MX

SUBJECT: RTAC PROGRAM - PROPOSED BUDGET CUTS FOR FY 1975

AND FY 1976

FOR AID (MESSRS. PARKER AND KLEINE)

USIA (FOR MR. KEOGH)

FROM AMBASSADOR JOVA

REF.: (1) STATE 174969, 8/10/74

(2) STATE 069757, 4/6/74

(3) MEXICO 4445, 5/20/74

1. I AM SURPRISED BY THE PROPOSAL IN STATE 174969 TO CUT THE REGIONAL TECHNICAL AIDS CENTER'S (RTAC) REGULAR PROGRAM BUDGET FROM \$1,689,000 TO \$500,000. WHILE THIS REDUCTION WOULD BE CUSHIONED BY SEPARATE FUNDING OF ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS AND SPECIAL INNOVATIVE PROJECTS, THE NET REDUCTION WOULD STILL BE AROUND \$500,000 AS I UNDERSTAND IT. BECAUSE OF FIXED COMMITMENTS UNDER OTHER RTAC PROGRAMS, THE FULL BRUNT OF THIS CUT WOULD FALL ON THE TECHNICAL BOOK PROGRAM, VIRTUALLY WIPING IT OUT.

2. THE TECHNICAL BOOK PROGRAM HAS BEEN HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL IN MEXICO AND THROUGHOUT LATIN AMERICA. IT HAS BEEN A VERY EFFECTIVE
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PAGE 02 MEXICO 07267 262004Z

MEANS OF TRANSFERRING TECHNOLOGY, A KEY OBJECTIVE OF OUR OVERALL

POLICY TOWARD LATIN AMERICA. IT HAS ALSO BEEN A SUBTLE WAY OF INDUCING A FAVORABLE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE UNITED STATES. IT ALSO PROVIDES SOME CONTINUED ACCESS TO THE UNIVERSITIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS WHICH ARE IMPORTANT CENTERS OF POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND TECHNOLOGICAL LEADERSHIP IN LATIN AMERICA.

3. I HAVE NO DESIRE TO INTERVENE IN ANY INTER-AGENCY BATTLE FOR FUNDS OR TO PROVOKE AN INTER-AGENCY ISSUE, NOR DO I WISH TO REOPEN A FIRM POLICY DECISION TO PHASE OUT THE RTAC IF SUCH A DECISION IN FACT HAS BEEN MADE. BUT, IF THE FUTURE OF RTAC IS STILL OPEN FOR DISCUSSION, I WOULD URGE A CAREFUL RECONSIDERATION OF A BUDGET PROPOSAL THAT WOULD EMASCULATE A PROGRAM THAT HAS BEEN EFFECTIVELY PROMOTING U.S. POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL OBJECTIVES IN LATIN AMERICA.

4. I DOUBLT THAT THERE ARE ANY OTHER INTERNATIONAL OR NATIONAL MEANS OF KEEPING THE TECHNICAL BOOK PROGRAM GOING IF THE U.S. PULLS OUT. PREVIOUSLY I RECOMMENDED THAT A STUDY BE MADE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF COMBINING THE USIS REGIONAL BOOK OFFICE (RBO) AND THE RTAC (MEXICO 4445). I REPEAT THAT RECOMMENDATION NOW.
JOVA

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